

BE **ACTIVE** YOUR WAY VA!

2009 Champions' Challenge

Guidelines for Local Coordinators

Veterans Canteen Service and the VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HealthierUS Veterans Initiative and MOVE!) are partnering to promote physical activity. The 2009 Champions' Challenge is designed to increase awareness of the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* recently released by the US Department of Health and Human Services. The new *Guidelines* are evidence-based and recommend that adults perform at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week to achieve long term health benefits.

Your Medical Center Director has chosen to participate in this national program and you have been designated as the local coordinator for your facility. The goal of the 2009 Champions' Challenge is for participants to complete 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week for at least 8 of 12 weeks between **March 29, 2009 and June 20, 2009**. Veterans Canteen Service (VCS) will provide prizes for participants at time of enrollment and at completion of 3 weeks and 8 weeks. The Champions' Challenge is designed primarily for Veterans and VA employees; however anyone is eligible to participate. All participants who complete the challenge will be eligible for entry into a national prize drawing sponsored by VCS. Last year the Champions Challenge was very successful with over 35,000 participants and a completion rate greater than eight percent. VCS awarded over \$140,000.00 in prizes. Together let's make the 2009 Champions' Challenge an even greater success.

Coordinator Responsibilities

1. Several weeks before March 29, 2009, set up a meeting with local VCS Chief (or designee) to begin planning for the Challenge at your facility and affiliated CBOCs.
 - Consider forming a local committee to assist in coordinating the Challenge.
 - a. **Possible committee members to consider:** MOVE! Coordinator, HUSV Coordinator, Prevention Coordinator, Employee Wellness Coordinator, Veteran/Patient Health Education Coordinator, Public Affairs Officer, Veterans Canteen Service Representative, Physical Activity Specialist, IRMS Representative, Voluntary Services Representative, CBOC representatives and other interested staff.
 - Develop a plan for managing prize distribution for CBOC and other remote participants. Consider recruiting an enthusiastic coordinator for each CBOC.
 - Coordinate distribution of promotional materials throughout your facility and CBOCs: posters, flyers, instructions, etc.
 - Work with your local Public Affairs Officer to promote the Challenge.
2. Coordinate a "Kick-Off Event" for the 2009 Champions' Challenge to occur early in the registration period. Registration begins on **March 29, 2009 and ends on May 2, 2009**.
 - Pick up posters/flyers from Veterans Canteen Service.
 - a. In the blank space at the bottom of the poster/flyer, fill in local Kick-Off and /or contact information.
 - Additional posters can be downloaded at: www.move.va.gov/challengeresources.asp
 - Display posters and flyers throughout the medical center, CBOCs, Vet Centers and other community locations where Veterans gather.
 - Participants may register on-line only at www.move.va.gov/challenge.asp (no paper-based registration will be available)
 - a. Have a web-linked computer(s) available for the Kick-Off. This will expedite the on-line registration process.

- b. Assist Veterans without computer access in identifying options for public access to computers
 - c. Have paper copies of participant instructions available to distribute at Kickoff Event.
 - d. Have materials available that highlight community resources for physical activity in your local area.
3. Serve as primary point of contact for participants regarding all aspects of Challenge. Be a role model and participate in the Challenge yourself.
4. Participate in national Champions' Challenge Coordinators Conference Calls. Brainstorm ideas, share successes and overcome barriers with other coordinators throughout the system.
5. Local tailoring options: Ways to make your Challenge a great success!
 - Organize local competitions between services, disciplines, CBOCs or any other groups to encourage participation.
 - Establish a "150-minute-club" for employees to encourage physical activity before and after work and during breaks.
 - Explore local options to provide additional incentives using local VCS promotional funds.
 - Consider creative methods to encourage and recognize participation on a regular basis (photos, newsletter announcements, staff meetings).
 - Coordinate with your local Public Affair Office to help promote the Challenge to Veterans and Staff.
6. Resources to help you have a successful Champions' Challenge
 - a. 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines Toolkit
<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/toolkit.aspx>
 - b. HealthierUS Veterans Toolkit
http://vaww.prevention.va.gov/HealthierUSVeterans_Toolkit.asp
 - c. MOVE! Physical Activity and Standard Handouts
<http://www.move.va.gov/Handouts.asp>
 - d. MyHealtheVet
<https://www.myhealth.va.gov>

Thank you for your participation as a local Champions' Challenge coordinator. Let's make this Challenge the one that gets everyone moving!

Please contact one of the following NCP or VCS staff members if you have any questions:

Sue Diamond RN, MSN (HealthierUS Veterans) 919-383-7874 ext. 244
Sue.Diamond@va.gov

Ken Jones, PhD (MOVE! Program Director) 919-383-7874 ext. 228
Kenneth.Jones6@va.gov

Tony Rogers (Technical support) 919-383-7874 ext. 252
Tony.Rogers@va.gov

Meryl Garnto, RD (VCS) 314-845-1356
meryl.garnto@va.gov